

Chattahoochee River

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Recreation Area
Georgia



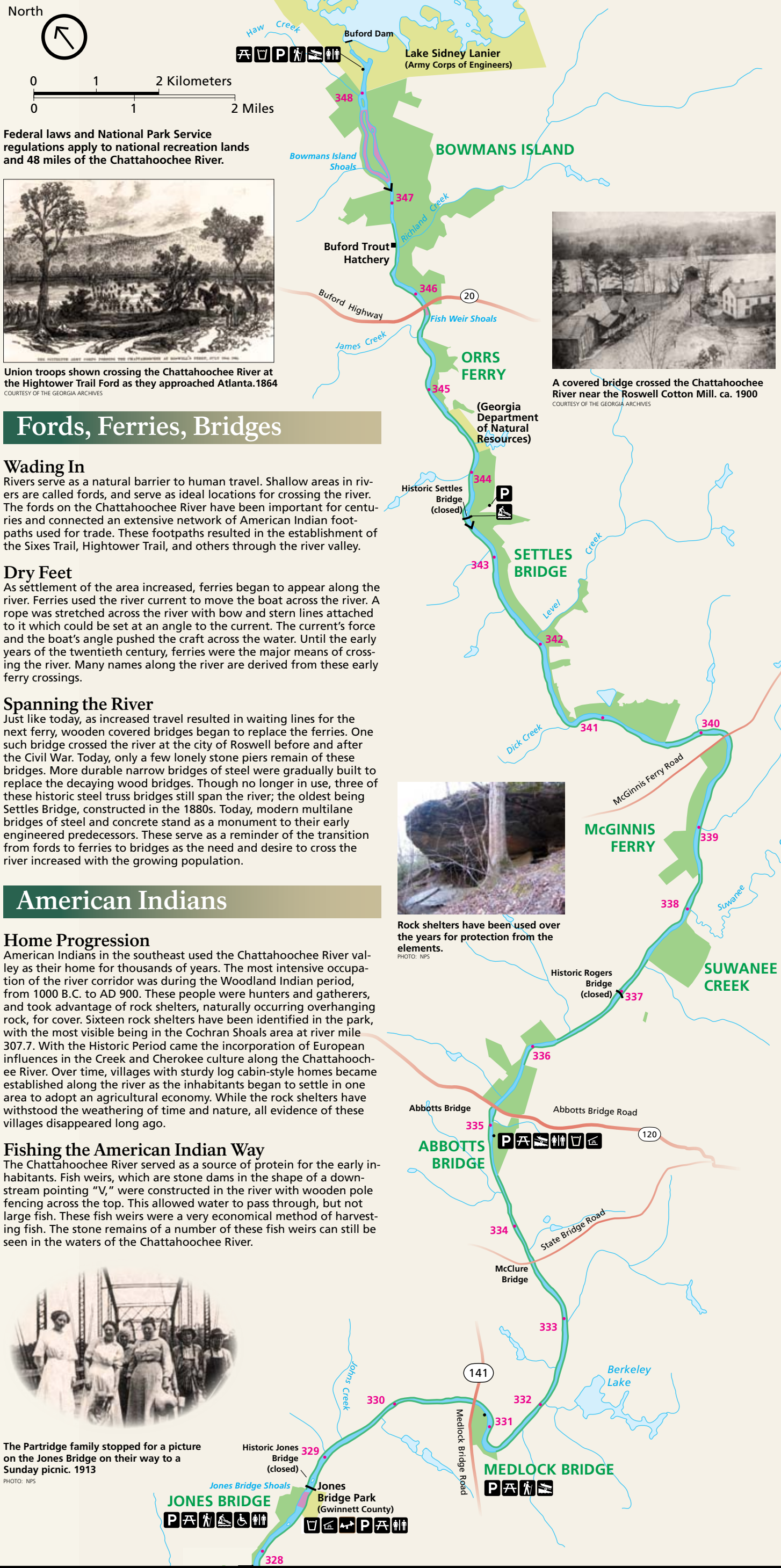
PHOTO: TOM WILSON



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The Chattahoochee River starts high in the Southern Appalachian Mountains in the Mark Trail Wilderness Area. Seeping from a patch of sand and gravel, the river travels down the steep mountainside, growing quickly, fed by many springs and small tributaries. The river passes through scenic mountain villages, past farms, factories, and subdivisions and into Lake Lanier. After dropping 197 feet, the river emerges at the base of Buford Dam to begin its 48 mile journey as the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area under the stewardship of the National Park Service. The beautiful river and the land along it have a rich history dating back for centuries. The word Chattahoochee is Native American and is thought to mean “River of Painted Rocks.” The Cherokee referred to the Chattahoochee River Corridor as the Enchanted Land. This guide is designed to help you discover the enchantment.

National Recreation Area (includes 48 miles of the Chattahoochee River)	Fish weir	Restrooms	Boat ramp	Wildlife viewing
Other public area	Bridge crossing	Parking	Boat launch	Bicycle trail
River milepost	Historic bridge or Prehistoric Trail crossing	Ranger station	Picnic area	Hiking trail
Shoal area		Drinking water	Picnic shelter	Wheelchair-accessible
		Playground		



River Guide

River Safety

The river emerges at the base of Buford Dam from the bottom of Lake Lanier. This cold bottom water poses a potential hazard to all river users. In the event of a spill, you are advised to get out of the water or help others out of the water as quickly as possible, as hypothermia can set in. In and below Bull Sluice Lake and Morgan Falls Dam, the water warms considerably, though caution is still advised. Contact the Corps of Engineers at 770-945-1466 to know dam release times when water levels will rise rapidly.

U.S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) must be worn by all persons between Buford Dam and the Hwy 20 Bridge. Below Hwy 20, each person must have a PFD readily accessible in any floating craft, including tubes and floats. PFDs must be worn by anyone under the age of 10 years at all times on any stretch of the river.

To ensure your safety, check weather conditions and forecast before every river trip. Watch for late afternoon thunderstorms. Get off the river in the event of lightning.

Wear suitable clothing. In summer, lightweight, quick-drying clothes are recommended. In cold weather, wool and wool-blends are recommended. Avoid denim and cotton, as these provide no insulation to the body. Always wear proper footgear. Flip-flops and similar footwear are discouraged. Be prepared for all types of weather; bring a rain jacket, hat, sunscreen, water, and high-energy snacks.

Watch for possible hazards, such as fallen trees, strong currents, slippery rocks, and logs. Unseen submerged rocks, logs, and debris can be hidden in the sometimes murky water.

Glass containers are not permitted on the Chattahoochee River from Buford Dam to Peachtree Creek. Styrofoam products are not recommended and are bad for the environment. Always pack out your litter.



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